

# HUNTING AHEAD OF ROOSEVELT

IN  
EAST  
AFRICA

## Shooting Rhinoceros in Uganda

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**T**HE rhinoceros met with in Uganda and British East Africa is the common black "rhinoceros bicornis," i. e., "the two-horned rhino." I have heard of "freaks" with three, and even five horns, but I have never seen one of them. The Indian rhino has only one horn; it also differs in having huge massive folds of skin, which make it look as if clad in a coat of mail, like a battle horse of the middle ages. Notwithstanding the absence of these folds, the skin of the African rhino is more than an inch thick along the back and sides, and over the abdomen, where it is comparatively thin, it is fully half an inch. An extinct two-horned species of rhino, discovered in the ice fields of Siberia, along with the extinct mammoth, had a shaggy coat of long wool; but the present Africa representatives of these antediluvian rhinos and elephants have practically a naked skin, with the exception of the tip of the tail, which is fringed with long bristles.

The upper lip of the rhino overlaps the lower, and it is pointed and prehensile. I watched a rhino browsing on the leaves of shrubs and bushes; it plucked off the single leaves as deftly as any experienced tea gatherer stripping a tea shrub of its leaves. It has very small eyes and a short range of vision; it does not seem to be able to distinguish a human being at a quarter of a mile, even when on a perfectly open plain.

### Military Bullets for Rhinos

Rhinos are greatly troubled by small, crab-like ticks; these small red-brown parasites cluster under the tail, along the abdomen and thighs, and around the base of the eyelashes. Though sight may be somewhat defective, hearing is fairly acute, and scent is extremely keen. I had occasion to notice this at Campi-ya Simba. Only my gun bearer, as we call the servant who carries one's gun or rifle, was with me, and I had but a single solid Lee-Metford bullet left, when we noticed a pair of rhinos, evidently a cow with her calf, on the open plain about a mile and a quarter from us. The calf was lying down and the cow stood by it motionless, with drooping head.

We had to pass them, as they were directly in our path; but we were not anxious to risk an encounter, having but one single solid bullet for our protection. We decided to give them a wide berth, and to outflank them at the same respectful distance of over a mile. As long as the wind was in our favor the rhinos did not stir; but as we were bound to pass to windward of them we kept a wary eye on their movements. Though there was but the faintest breath of wind, the very instant almost that we got to windward of them the cow started and turned round, and the young one jumped up. Both rhinos appeared greatly alarmed, and we could see that we were the cause, although invisible to them.

The rhinos I have shot, amongst them two fine old bulls, were all smaller than my hippos. The rhino has three toes, the hippo four and the elephant five. The foot of the elephant is the largest in size, the rhino foot comes next. The hippo has a comparatively small foot for so large a body; this difference in size is explained by the fact that the hippo spends the greater part of its existence in the water swimming. The horns of the rhinoceros are part and parcel of the skin, and merely a modification of it, like a nail. It follows that the horns can be stripped off the skull without injuring any bone. The anterior horn is usually longer than the posterior horn, but sometimes the reverse is the case. The posterior horn rests between the eyes on the frontal bone, but the anterior horn is supported on the nose, the nasal bones being raised and strengthened to form a hard bony bump.

The horns are solid; the anterior curves backward, the posterior is straight and pyramidal. The anterior horn of the female is usually more elegant than the corresponding horn of the male, which is evidently a very terrible weapon for fighting with, being short, stumpy, sharply pointed and very massive. The longest horn in my possession came from my first rhino, a female; it measures 25 inches along the outer curve from tip to base.

If a caravan walking in single file stretches a long, threatening line across the path of the rhino, it probably will charge right through the line, under the impression that this is a hostile demonstration meant to encircle it; but once through the line, it hurries away, only too eager to escape. It was at Nalobi, the Kikuyu end of the Athi plains, where I shot my first and second rhino. I was in charge of a big caravan, as I was taking ex-King Mboogo with his family and followers back to Uganda. We were delayed at Fort Smith and the food supply was running short. I therefore went to shoot game, and I had shot

one hartebeest antelope and two Thomsoni gazelles when a pair of rhinos appeared in the distance. The wind was blowing from the rhinos towards us; I was therefore able to approach within 200 yards. I used the Lee-Speed rifle with solid bullet.

### Bagging Two

At the first shot, at the rhino with the longest horn, it sank into a sitting posture on its hind legs, and at the second shot it rolled over. The other rhino raced furiously round and round in ever increasing circles around the fallen one, and then went off at a tangent. On walking up to the fallen rhino it staggered to its feet and attempted to charge, but it only gored the ground and fell down again. A bullet given as a coup-de-grace in the head extinguished life. It was a huge old female.

Very few of the caravan porters had accompanied me, they could only carry therefore the rhino head to Fort Smith, in addition to the game already shot. Early next morning a numerous crowd left the fort to supply themselves with meat off the rhino. I followed later on, but not feeling up to doing the six hours' march required to get there and back, I decided to take with me my light network hammock. It is a very suitable one for travelers. I bought it at Zanzibar to meet any unforeseen emergency; it folds up and slips into a tiny satchel. I little thought how useful I should find it. On reaching Nalobi I was met by my headman and the others who had gone with him. He told me that not a scrap of the dead rhino could be found. Lions and hyenas had devoured it during the night. In fact, if I had not brought already the rhino's head to Fort Smith

grass barely six inches high. I had thus the advantage of seeing the game, but the disadvantage of being seen by it. As I drew nearer I saw, still farther off, again a pair of rhinos. Trusting to their limited range of vision and to the wind being in my favor, I went towards the pair. At 200 yards they appeared to have noticed us, for they stood and looked towards us. Kneeling on the ground I aimed at the one with the longer horn; but just as I pulled the trigger the smaller rhino veered round and intercepted my bullet; the wound was not a mortal one. With a snort of rage both animals came in a sharp trot toward us.

### Charged by Two At Once

My two men would have started up and bolted, but I just managed to prevent it. All three of us now crawled off on our stomachs, endeavoring to get out of the way of the advancing rhinos. The two others got ahead of me, when suddenly my Martini rifle, which I was dragging along with my left hand, blazed off. The muzzle was pointing behind me and at the moment nearly touched my left foot. The bullet went clean through my foot. The trigger, I suppose, had caught in some stubble. What made it worse was that the loud report was accompanied by a cloud of smoke, though I am not sure now whether it was not this very smoke which hid us from the two approaching rhinos. My men jumped up and ran away, whereupon I, too, jumped up and ran; but within fifty yards or less I sank to the ground, overpowered by the pain in my wounded foot.

The rhinos fortunately galloped off without having seen us. I wore long, heavy leather shooting boots, reaching

to be the accredited village surgeon. A man appeared at the forge with an injured great toe. The blacksmith requested him to put his foot on the anvil, and before either patient or on-lookers had time to realize what was about to happen, with a stroke of his chisel and hammer the blacksmith had clean chopped off the toe.

The three hours' return journey to the fort allowed time for the collateral circulation to establish itself in my injured foot, and when I dressed the wound at the fort I was delighted to find that amputation was not necessary. Within a month, applying ordinary antiseptic treatment, the wound had thoroughly healed, leaving a linear scar on the dorsal surface and a round scar on the sole of the foot where the bullet had made its exit. Also the long tendon, upon which depends so much of the movement of the great toe, became reunited, though clean severed by the accident. In the course of a month a good deal of the original movement was restored to the injured part.

My third rhino was again an old bull. I shot it near the Kiboko river, to the west side of the caravan route. There was a good deal of bush about, which made it easy to stalk within twenty yards of the rhino. I used the Martini rifle. I preferred, owing to the position of the rhino, to try the shoulder shot. At once it turned to charge, but it was evidently mortally wounded, for it staggered as it gored at the nearest bush. A second bullet, fired at the head, entered the brain and rolled it over. One man went off to carry the welcome news to the caravan and to act as guide to those who were willing to fetch the meat supply to the camp. In the meanwhile another of my men began to cut up the rhino.

caused the old cow to stagger and rooted her to the spot. But the young bull was bent on doing mischief, and I had to shoot him. I gave him two shots in rapid succession; he gave a scream and a snort, staggered and retreated to where the old one stood. As he got near to her, he rolled over with his feet in the air, but somehow he managed to scramble up once more, staggered a few yards further and rolled over finally on to his side. In the meanwhile I gave several shots to the old one, to put her out of pain, as blood was streaming from her nose and mouth. Then she, too, fell down and rolled over. Curiously enough, their backs were turned towards each other and their tails almost touching. The female had a remarkable anterior.

It was about this time that I was compelled to turn from the hunting of animals to the hunting of men, as the Wanyoro rebellion was growing all around us daily.

The feeling of insecurity and impending disaster seemed present with every one; for my four servants, who sleep in huts outside the fort at Masindi, came to me in a body and asked permission to sleep this night inside the fort and near me. I gave, of course, a ready consent.

Darkness had set in, and I was in my hut—the medical officer's residence—in the fort at Masindi, entering in a diary by candle light the events of the day. This hut consists of mud walls, a grass-thatched roof, a mud floor, two apertures serving as windows and closed by wooden shutters, and a wooden door. It was overrun by white ants, spiders and rats.

Suddenly, at 8:30 p. m., two men came running into my room—Fadimula Effendi, the Sudanese officer in command, and the headman of Kagan-



were shouting angrily, but as I did not understand one word I was fortunately able to remain unmoved. My Arab, however, understood, and he said to me in Swahili: "Master, get back to the house; they mean to do you some harm." Even if I had wanted to retreat, I could not have done so, as I was hemmed in on all sides. It is surprising that one of the rifles in all this pushing and surging crowd did not go off by accident and stretch me dead. A merciful Providence saved my life and saved, thereby, the whole of Unyoro; for my death would have committed the men, once for all, to throw in their lot with the mutineers and to fight to the bitter end against the avenging hand of England's might, which was already overtaking the other murderers. I felt that I was appreciably near death, for the bearing of the soldiers was most menacing.

Fortunately, the Effendi's voice was heard shouting over and over again: "It is not war against the fort." This no doubt helped to save us and the fort. None of the soldiers seemed to know exactly what was to be the next step, and whether or not it was to be open mutiny against the government. They had not yet quite made up their minds whether I was to be killed. Presumably no one had a private grudge to avenge on my person, and not a few of them may have been at one time or another under my hands for medical treatment. I endeavored to get them under control by pointing out that the fort had to be defended against the supposed common enemy. Gradually I regained some authority over them, and they obeyed me so far that they went to guard various positions which I indicated, such as the bastions, the powder magazine and the ammunition store. But when I wanted to leave the fort, to attend to what was happening outside, they finally but politely refused to let me out, on pretext that my life would be in danger. For a short time I was practically a prisoner inside the fort in the hands of the Sudanese soldiers.

In the meanwhile a number of shots were being fired outside the fort, and the sky had become lurid with burning huts. The first rumor, as brought to me by Fadimula Effendi, that the sergeant major had been killed by Wanyoro at Bekamba's kraal, no doubt led to the insubordinate soldiers attacking Bekamba. The unfortunate chief requested to be taken to the fort, and had reached in his cart the open space in front of the fort when some of the soldiers ordered the man who pulled Bekamba's cart to be down, and then some one shot him through the back, dead on the spot. Thereupon another soldier blew out Bekamba's brains. The dead bodies were plundered and stripped.

When the Effendi joined me I managed with him to leave the fort, in order to put a stop to the disturbances going on outside. The burning kraals had made the night as light as day. A dreadful sight met my eyes. There, near the fort, lay the naked bodies of Chief Bekamba and one of his men. Some wretches had set fire to Bekamba's body and the flesh was burning. As the crackling flames flickered around the abdomen the frizzling of the flesh was horrible and sickening. It recalled to my mind stories, read in my boyhood, of red Indians torturing a white man to death by stretching him out on the ground and heaping fire on his abdomen. With the assistance of my servant I pulled Bekamba's body from the burning brands and extinguished the flames. I looked at his wounds. Death must have been instantaneous, and therefore he was spared the torture of being roasted.

The kraal of Kajanga, our friendly ally, had also been set on fire and had been looted. There were a number of cartridges in his hut, and as these took fire their crackler-like popping off rendered it dangerous to approach too

near his kraal. Some of the bullet fell close to my feet.

I now asked to see the dead body of the sergeant major, stated to have been killed at the outbreak of these disturbances. I found him lying on a couch in his own hut, encircled by a sympathizing crowd of women and friends, all waiting for him to breathe his last. Not one of them attempted to staunch the flow of blood from his wound. I had him quickly removed to the fort and converted one of the buildings into a temporary hospital. Though he had a dangerous spear wound in his back, below the right shoulder, his life was ultimately saved.

Next morning we buried the dead—Bekamba, one of his wives and two Wanyoro. But some fugitives carried the news of these occurrences to Holma, two days' march from us, where a Sudanese captain was in charge of the fort. Yabuswezi, the great Wanyoro chief, has his kraal about a mile from Fort Holma. Some fugitives reported to him that I, too, had been killed. He thereupon put himself on the defensive. This led to the Sudanese captain ordering him to come to the fort and, on his refusal to do so, attacking his kraal. Thus the mere rumor of my death led to further bloodshed, for the Sudanese soldiers killed about fifty of the Wanyoro under Yabuswezi, captured some fifty-four of his women and looted and burned his kraal. Yabuswezi himself fled over the border, with the intention of proceeding to Kampala.

The military officer in command of Unyoro, having received my letter, speedily joined me. Orders were also received from headquarters that, in view of the advance of the mutineers toward Unyoro, it was necessary to prevent the government ammunition from falling into their hands. I was ordered, thereupon, to march, with half a company of the Sudanese soldiers then at Masindi, to a place called Ntuti, in Singo. I was to take charge of 21 loads of ammunition, a Maxim gun and tools and belts for the gun.

On the march to Ntuti I passed through Holma and found seven of the Wanyoro women still retained as captives by Sudanese soldiers, although orders had been sent by the commanding officer that all were to be liberated. I, therefore, had these seven women set free.

I met Yabuswezi and persuaded him to return to his province.

The ostensible reason of my departure from Masindi with the half company of Sudanese, the Maxim gun and the ammunition was supposed to be the necessity of holding Ntuti, in Singo, against the rebel king, Wyanga. We arrived at Ntuti. In a couple of days orders from headquarters reached me to march on to Kampala, where the soldiers were promptly disarmed and the Maxim gun and ammunition safely lodged in the fort. I had an anxious time to it from Masindi to Kampala. First of all, because the soldiers over which I had temporary command were some of the men who a few days previously had murdered Bekamba and had endangered my own life; they were at heart disloyal, and they had very nearly openly mutinied. Secondly, the Maxim gun and the 21 loads of ammunition would have strengthened the mutineers enormously, if they could have managed to intercept me on the march.

It was a great relief to me when, on arrival at Kampala, my military command ended. A few days later Capt. Harrison gained a final success over the mutineers, which practically ended the mutiny, though it cost the life of one more European, Capt. Maloney, who was dangerously wounded in the attack and succumbed to his injuries. Capt. Fielding and Capt. Macdonald fell in the earlier engagements.

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ENDEAVORING TO GET OUT OF THE WAY OF THE ADVANCING RHINOS

my story of having shot a rhino might have appeared a myth.

### Stalking in the Grass

The second day after, a pair of old rhinos appeared in sight; there was a good deal of grass about, and I was able to stalk up to within a hundred yards. They were almost walking side by side, grazing as they went along. I aimed behind the right shoulder, using the same Lee-Speed rifle. On receiving the bullet the rhino sped around toward me and gave a fierce snort of rage. I dropped flat on the ground to hide myself, fully expecting it would charge, and trusting it might not see me in the long grass. As it did not charge I ventured to raise myself to find out what had become of it. Both rhinos had disappeared over the ridge of the hill. We followed with great caution, not knowing if the wounded rhino might not be playing a dangerous game of hide-and-seek with us in the long grass. I could see one rhino racing away in the plain beyond, already a mile or more beyond our reach. At last we discovered the other rhino; it was dead, killed by that one shot. It was an old bull with a short but very powerful horn. I was glad that the crowd, having come all this distance to get rhino meat, would not be disappointed after all, and I left them chopping up the huge carcass.

In the meanwhile I tried to stalk an antelope I had seen about a mile off; for just beyond this patch of long grass the plain was covered with short

up to my knees. With some difficulty I got the boot and the blood-soaked sock off. The bullet had not smashed up the parts, but drilled a clean hole where the great toe joins the foot. The toe itself was cold, blue and apparently dead. I tore off a long strip of cloth to serve as a tourniquet and bandaged, and twisted it tightly over the injured part to staunch the flow of blood. My two men returned to me with sincere regrets at not having noticed, in their panic, my accident. The sorrow and universal sympathy of my black servants and caravan porters was touching and gratifying, as I am certainly in favor of upholding strict discipline in a caravan. I am certain natives appreciate a white man's rule the more if he is firm, but at the same time scrupulously just in his dealings with them.

### The Hunter Returns Wounded

My hammock now proved very welcome, and in it I was carried back to Fort Smith. What worried me on the way was not so much the pain as the thought that, if the great toe was not so really done for, I should have to amputate my own toe, not a very pleasing prospect, or as an alternative, something even more disagreeable to contemplate, I should have to ask one of the officials at the fort to cut the toe off and not one of them had the necessary surgical knowledge. This brought vividly to my mind a scene once witnessed by my father in an Indian village. A blacksmith happened

### Deserted by the Servants

Last time I passed by the Kiboko river I came, to the east side of the caravan route, upon a fine old rhino bull; but I could not get sufficiently near, as a deep and wooded hollow intervened. I had three of my men with me, but the moment we sighted the rhino they left me and swarmed up the nearest trees. Only some considerable time after the rhino disappeared, crashing in headlong flight through the bushes, did my brave boys descend from their perch of safety.

My fourth rhino was a young solitary bull; I called it "the baby," though it was considerably larger than a donkey, and evidently old enough to have started on its solitary journey on its own responsibility. Owing to the drought we had camped where we could find water, and the porters called this camp "Campi-yadaktari"—"the doctor's camp." It lies between Campi-ya-simba and Muani. The ground here was literally covered with large beetles and biggish scorpions.

My last two rhinos, an old female and a young male, I shot at Lanjora. I had to make a very wide circuit to get round them, so as to have the wind in my favor. The plain was perfectly open and only quite short grass was on it, not a tree or shrub could be seen for miles around. When 100 yards off, the rhinos saw me and at once trotted towards us. I knelt down and fired, using the Lee-Speed rifle. The very first shot took effect, and

ga, our Wanyoro ally. Both men were armed. The Effendi hurriedly told me that the Sudanese sergeant major, when doing his round of patrol inspection, had been set upon by hostile Wanyoro and had been killed by a spear thrust in the back. As I turned to get my Martini rifle and a lantern the Effendi rushed away, and I did not see him again till after the occurrence of the subsequent sad events. As I hurried towards the entrance of the fort I was accompanied by the Armenian clerk and by my servants, my plucky little Wahima boy keeping close to my side and carrying my rifle for me; my Arab servant had armed himself with my second rifle. Before I could reach the entrance I was met by a rush of armed Sudanese soldiers and completely surrounded by them near the corn stores inside the fort.

These corn stores consist of huge wicker baskets, plastered on the inside and on the outside with mud. They are raised above the ground on wooden trestles about two feet high; and they are protected against sun and rain by a grass-thatched cover resembling a candle extinguisher. Dry food, such as Indian corn, is stored up in this manner in anticipation of unforeseen occurrences.

Nearly all the Sudanese soldiers at the time at Masindi were raw recruits. When they surrounded me they were mad with excitement. They had refused to listen to their officer's voice and had rushed into the fort against his direct orders. All their rifles were loaded and were pointed at me. They

“Among the African Pigmies” is the next article in this remarkable series. It was Captain Guy Burrows, late Commandant of the Congo, who wrote the article on African Cannibals that attracted such wide attention. It is a strange story of a strange people.